(c) whether Government would rethink in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Lack of material for cable joints in Mainpuri

†1936. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a lack of material required for cable joints in Mainpuri;

(b) if so, the value of material in terms of rupees purchased last year; and

(c) the reasons for not covering the cable permanently in Anjani?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Not applicable in view of (a) above.

(c) Cable enroute to village Anjani is not open at any point and the cable joints have been permanenlty closed.

Post Offices in Port Blair

†1937. PROF. M. M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of post offices opened, so far, in rural and remote areas of Port Blair; and

(b) the number of post offices proposed to be opened in the Union Territory under the future schemes?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) So far, 87 post offices have been opened in rural and remote areas of Port Blair.

(b) Opening of new post offices in the Union Territory under the future schemes is subject to the fulfilment of prescribed norms and availability of requisite resources.

Post Offices in Rural, Hilly and Remote Areas

†1938. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria for opening new post offices in rural, hilly and remote areas of the country; and

(b) the number of post offices opened or likely to be opened in the North-East States of the country, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Andaman and Nicobar Islands on the basis of prescribed criteria during the last three years and till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The criteria for opening of new post offices in rural, hilly and remote areas of the country are given in statement-I. (*See* below).

(b) The number of post offices opened in the North-East circle, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Andaman and Nicobar Islands on the basis of prescribed criteria during the last three years and during the current year (till date) is given in statement-II. (*See* below) The opening of the post offices depends upon fulfilment of prescribed norms and availability of requisite resources.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.